

# Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Long Distance Trails Group Office  
Santa Fe, New Mexico



## Status Report Fiscal Year 2002







Devil's Elbow Bridge, Missouri.

---

*The perpetuation of this American symbol is dependent on a coordinated, national effort to preserve significant and representative physical resources along the route.*

---

## Introduction

**Route 66.** It crosses the heart of America, demonstrating the delights and realities of a wide cross-section of American culture along the way. The highway has come to symbolize the spirit and freedom of America, and the pursuit of the American Dream. The mere mention of the legendary road inspires reverie, tales of adventure, and the evolution of our modern culture. The essence of the route is alive in the minds of millions throughout the world via song, film, books, and personal experience. Perpetuation of this American symbol, however, is dependent on a coordinated, national effort to preserve significant and representative physical resources along the route.

To address this need, in 1999 Congress passed Public Law 106-45, the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Act. The Act was legislated with the intent of creating a program of technical assistance and grants that will set priorities and precedents for the preservation of Route 66 cultural resources. In addition to preserving a national symbol, the initiative will potentially stimulate business and economic growth in 30 congressional districts in the eight states through which the route passes. A majority of these districts include rural communities in need of economic enrichment, which is possible through Route 66 heritage tourism.

## The Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

To meet the objectives of the Act, the National Park Service established the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program (hereinafter, "the Program"), which is administered through the Long Distance Trails Group Office in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Since its inception in fiscal year 2001, the intention of the Program has been to identify, prioritize, and assist Route 66 preservation needs through collaboration and cooperation with government, private, and organizational partners. To date, the Program has provided a series of cost-share awards and grants to help preserve and restore the most significant and representative resources from the route's period of outstanding historic significance (1926-70). The Program is also serving as a clearinghouse of preservation information and technical assistance.

The Program will legislatively terminate at the end of fiscal year 2009 at which time the Act anticipates that the National Park Service will have successfully developed the Program to enable a non-federal entity (or entities) to continue the Program's purpose.

## Program Goals/Activities

Since the Program was established in April 2001, the following has been accomplished:

### ■ Development of Program Staff

A program manager and cultural resource specialist were hired to implement and facilitate the objectives of the Act.

### ■ Building Partnerships

The Program has actively sought the participation of partners in the process of prioritizing program goals to best meet the preservation needs of the route. Partners include federal, state, city, tribal, Route 66 association, and other invested representatives. To date, the Program has met individually with numerous partners along the route, and has held two working meetings with wide partnership representation. These meetings have resulted in enthusiastic and valuable input related to the identification and prioritization of preservation needs, and in action toward the creation of an 11-member advisory committee. The role of the advisory committee will be to provide a forum for diverse interests to discuss issues and advise the National Park Service on Program matters.

### ■ Development of Clearinghouse Function

A goal of the Program is to facilitate the dissemination of Route 66 preservation information, including preservation standards and guidelines, technical briefs, the National Register of Historic Places, preservation grants, and preservation training opportunities. All information is selected to address the unique needs of Route 66, and to reinforce the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. The development of this information storehouse and the means to disseminate it will include a website, informational pamphlet, technical resource guide book, and a regular series of local meetings with stakeholders along the route.

### ■ Administration of Cost Share Awards and Grants

The Program has provided cost-share awards and grants in each of the eight states through which Route 66 passes.

The funds have gone toward the identification and preservation of resources that are significant components of the Route 66 corridor, and that still retain their architectural and/or archeological integrity. The funded projects include historic building inventory surveys, National Register nominations, and "brick and mortar" work. In 2001, \$410,000 was awarded for these purposes; it is estimated that \$150,000 will be awarded in 2002. These projects are described in more detail on pages 3 and 4.

## Looking Forward

To date, the Program has made significant strides toward establishing Program priorities and developing rapport with stakeholders. The Program has also provided limited support to preservation projects through grant and cost-share awards. Immediate Program goals include expansion of the technical assistance program, more rigorous funding of grant/cost-share projects to preserve endangered Route 66 resources and icons, and the establishment of an organization to carry on the objectives of the Program in 2009. These undertakings will be completed in a manner that sets a national precedent for the management and treatment of significant historic roads.

To fulfill the purpose of the Act, \$10 million was authorized for appropriation for fiscal years 2000 through 2009. \$500,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2001, and \$300,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2002. Both appropriations represent the funding used to support all Program requirements including administrative costs, cost-share/grant awards, publicity, etc. **The submitted budget request necessary to meet projected program needs in fiscal year 2003 is at \$1.25 million.**

The Long Distance Trails Group Office – Santa Fe administers the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program. To contact the Program Manager:

**Michael R. Taylor**  
Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program  
National Park Service  
Long Distance Trails Group Office  
PO Box 728  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504

**Phone**  
505-988-6742

**E-Mail**  
michael\_taylor@nps.gov

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



Buildings like Tewa Lodge in New Mexico are being surveyed to create a comprehensive inventory of Route 66 resources. Inventories are the foundation of effective resource management. They help to identify preservation needs and resources eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.



# Funded Projects



**Illinois – The restoration of the Odell Standard Oil Gas Station is ongoing.**



**Missouri – A survey of properties including the Cedar Inn Restaurant will be completed, and National Register nominations will be prepared for eligible properties.**



**Kansas – A survey of properties such as those in downtown Galena will be conducted and National Register nominations will be prepared for eligible properties.**



**Oklahoma – Documentation of Route 66 roadbeds will enable preservationists to work with the Department of Transportation to preserve the historic context of the road while meeting modern safety requirements.**

---

## Illinois

Further restoration of the 1932 Odell Standard Oil Gas Station will be enabled through Program funds. The Odell Gas Station received the prestigious 2001 Cyrus Avery Award for the most outstanding Route 66 preservation project. This is a cost-share award with the town of Odell.

---

## Missouri

A survey of historic properties associated with Route 66, and the preparation of National Register of Historic Places nominations for endangered properties will be completed. National Register status makes those properties eligible for tax credits and other preservation incentives.

---

## Kansas

A comprehensive survey of historic properties associated with Route 66, including buildings, ruins, archeological sites, bridges, and road alignments, will be conducted. National Register nominations for endangered properties will also be prepared, which will make those properties eligible for tax credits and other preservation incentives.

---

## Oklahoma

Three projects will be undertaken: 1) documentation of extant Route 66 roadbeds and establishment of priorities and methodologies for the management and treatment of those historic roadbed segments in consultation with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation; 2) update and expansion of 1984 inventory survey; and 3) funding of the restoration/rehabilitation grant program through the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office.

# Funded Projects

(Continued from page 3)



**Texas** – A survey of properties including the U-Drop Inn Cafe will be completed to create a baseline inventory of Route 66 resources.



**New Mexico** – Five New Mexico Route 66 neon signs will be restored to working condition.



**Arizona** – A condition assessment will be prepared for the Rialto Theater in Winslow. The roof, façade and entry will be repaired.



**California** – A historic structures report will be prepared for the Aztec Hotel in Monrovia.

---

## Texas

A comprehensive survey of historic properties associated with Route 66 will be conducted, including buildings, engineered structures, properties visible from the highway in rural areas, and the commercial districts of communities through which Route 66 passes.

---

## New Mexico

An update of earlier survey work will be completed to include cultural resources along the pre-1937 (Santa Fe) route; properties located on American Indian lands; and roadside attractions such as historic signs, scenic overlooks, “tourist traps,” “snakepits,” and selected commercial archeological sites. National Register nominations will also be completed, including one for “La Bajada,” the 1920’s road segment south of Santa Fe.

A Route 66 Neon Sign Restoration Project will also be implemented to restore and make operable five historic signs in several Route 66 towns. In addition, the New Mexico Preservation Heritage Alliance will review and study sign ordinances and other policies along Route 66 in New Mexico to ensure that maintenance and preservation objectives are met. A model sign ordinance will be one of the products from this project, which will be shared with other organizations along Route 66 throughout the eight states.

---

## Arizona

A condition assessment will be prepared and priority preservation work will be implemented for the historic Rialto Theatre in downtown Winslow. The Rialto was built in 1920 for performing arts and vaudeville acts and then converted to a cinema. It has been closed since 1966. The work will include roof, façade and entry repair. This is a cost-share project with the City of Winslow.

---

## California

A historic structures report will be produced and priority stabilization/rehabilitation work implemented at the Aztec Hotel in Monrovia. The Aztec was built in 1924-25 in a Mayan Revival style to encourage travelers along Route 66 to stay in Monrovia. It was constructed as a lavish hotel located in the Los Angeles foothills, and has recently been acquired by a property owner who has already made tremendous inroads towards its resurrection as a destination spot along Route 66. This is a cost-share project with the City of Monrovia.